The United Kingdom Is Doomed by a Perniciously Wimpy Form of Political Correctness

[Daniel J. Mitchell]

Normally, I get pessimistic about the future when I think about wasteful spending programs that will **drive almost all developed nations into bankruptcy**. And America is on that list, by the way, because of our **poorly designed entitlement programs**.

But sometimes my despair is the result of idiotic political correctness and bone-headed bureaucracy. And for some reason, as shown by these examples, the United Kingdom seems to have a disproportionate share of morons who want to impose bad policy on their fellow citizens.

- A job-placement center **got in trouble for discriminating against incompetent people** by seeking "reliable" and "hard-working" candidates.
- A women who was being threatened by thugs **got in trouble with the police for brandishing a knife in her own home**.
- A proposal to **prevent children from watching Olympic shooting events**.
- A man got **arrested for finding a gun in his yard and turning it over to the police**.
- The government wanted to **require "competency tests" for pet owners**.
- An **ID requirement to buy teaspoons**.
- The most **useless sign in the history of the world**.
- A **proposal to ban skinny models**.

But I don't know if any of those horror stories can match this **baffling story reported in the Telegraph**.

Public Enemy No. 1?

> *When the chief starter at the London Olympics agreed to fire his pistol to start the races at a school sports day, parents thought it was a wonderful treat for their children. But they did not count on the intervention of health and safety officials from their local council, who ruled that the noise from Alan Bell's starting pistol would be too frightening for the youngsters. Bizarrely, the local authority instead suggested playing a recording of a starting pistol on an iPod before agreeing to let Mr Bell start the races by sounding a klaxon. …One parent, who did not wish to be named, told a Sunday newspaper: "It was ridiculous. We were told that the children would be distressed by Mr Bell firing his starting pistol. "Anyone who believes they would be frightened by a starting pistol has never experienced the noise at a typical three-year-old's birthday party. …Norman Gardiner,*

> *president of the Pitreavie Amateur Athletics Club in Dunfermline, said the decision was "health and safety gone mad."*

It's amazing to think that the United Kingdom once ruled half the world, but now produces pencil-neck bureaucrats who think starting pistols are a menace to society.

But we Americans shouldn't feel superior. We're traveling down the same path.

- A Rhode Island boy **got in trouble for bringing toy soldiers to school**.
- A student in San Diego **got in trouble for making a motion detector for a science project**, simply because someone decided it resembled a bomb.
- The military was **criticized for giving Osama bin Laden an Indian code name (Geronimo)** as part of the operation to exterminate the al Qaeda dirtbag.
- A Florida student was **expelled for having a toy gun on school property**.
- And how can we omit the politicians in San Francisco, who decided that **banning happy meal toys was an appropriate use of government coercion**.
- We also have regulations in Maryland **governing the application of sunscreen at summer camps**.
- And proposals in Seattle to **require life vests on swimmers who are more than five feet from shore**.

My initial instinct is that we should fire the **over-paid bureaucrats** who generate this kind of nonsense. I admit that such as step might only address the symptom of a politically correct world, but it would be a good start.

(hat tip to my fellow Bulldog **Charles Oliver**)